



## U.S. Embassy San Jose Green Committee

**Vision:** To implement sustainable environmental practices that will have a positive impact on Embassy San Jose's ecological footprint. The overarching goal will be to seek out solutions to protect and improve the environment. This will be accomplished by influencing policy making decisions and practices, recommending best practices and courses of action to senior leadership, and informing and showcasing the benefits of sustainable practices to internal and external audiences both within the Department of State and the public at-large.

**Who We Are:** The Embassy Green Team, is a group of Embassy personnel from diverse occupational disciplines, working together to create sustainable solutions that will be beneficial to Embassy San Jose and the community we live in. These solutions are meant to make use of the resources available and optimize personal/professional experience to generate creative ideas.

### Green Project: The People's Garden

The USDA office has developed a community garden on the grounds of the Embassy to demonstrate sustainable practices that nurture, maintain and protect the health of our soil, water and air. It is also a beautiful place in the neighborhood where people can gather to learn, share and enjoy our natural environment.

The Printer Consolidation project will phase out personal printers, replacing them with high-capacity network printers throughout the Embassy. This project has the following benefits:

- **Reduction in energy consumption.** As many as 120KW hours saved per removed printer per annum.
- **Improved office air quality.** Studies indicate that the ultra-fine particles produced by laser printer toner can be harmful to your health. Fewer printers make for better air quality in our work environment.
- **More cost-effective printing.** High-speed, high-volume, duplexing (printing on both sides of the page) network printers give us a much lower cost per page, and save paper.
- Fewer printers mean more precious desk space.

The project is still ongoing – however, 20 printers were removed in the first couple months of the initiative. We will continue this project throughout the rest of the Embassy in 2011, but estimate these initial reductions will save approximately \$250 in energy costs, 4500 kWh in energy consumption and 6100 pounds of carbon emissions.

### Energy/Water Conservation:

The Facilities section has developed several green initiatives, in an effort to reduce our energy and water consumption:

- The education, electrical evaluations and awareness of our Residential Energy Program have shown positive results and a decrease in our overall residential energy consumption over the last quarter.
- We have initiated a program to review and monitor monthly water consumption with aims to identify trends and increases often caused by underground water leaks.
- We have completed a residential water quality test study with satisfactory results in all residential areas with the intent to eliminate the use and delivery of bottled water.
- Obtained various models, options and cost estimates of solar hot water heater conversions for the Government Owned Residences, entered the project requirements into OBO's Building Management Information System database and engaged negotiations with OBO for possible FY11 funding.

### Recycling Program

The Recycling Program initiative started back in 2005, to properly separate our waste and reduce the amount of waste that was sent to the landfills. This program initiated by collecting paper, carton board, aluminum and plastic bottles. Over the years this initiative has grown, and different recyclable items have been added to the program such as batteries, glass, fluorescent light bulbs, electronic waste, and Tetra Pak. The Recycling Program has had such a positive effect on people, that new and bigger bins were required to improve the capacity to collect all materials. Also, we placed signs with interesting facts about recycling to create awareness among the Embassy community and to encourage people to be more environmentally friendly.

Since 2005, the Recycling Program has collected over 50 tons of waste which would have been sent to the landfill.